United Nations

Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Two meetings with Angolan parties set up by UNAVEM II to be held in city of Caxito today and tomorrow; United Nations spokesman confirms that 20 Brazilian and 50 Russian nationals have been seized by UNITA.

+ Co-Chairmen for International Conference on Former Yugoslavia reject possibility of lifting arms embargo for Bosnia and Herzegovina, saying such move would only widen and deepen war, with risk of it spreading to other States in the region.

+ Commercial activities by ships "in which a majority or controlling interest is held by a person or undertaking in or operation from" the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), even though sailing under flag of some other country, are in violation of mandatory sanctions against that country, says Chairman of Sanctions Committee.

+ Commissioner General of UNWRA foresees reduced level of operations for Agency; appeals for increased support.

+ Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament holds its fourth plenary session in New York from 28 to 30 October 1992.

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Describing the situation in Angola as continously "tense", officials in the United Nations Verifications Mission in that country (UNAVEM II) today informed the United Nations that they had succeeded in setting up two meetings with the parties in the city of Caxito, east of Luanda.

According to a United Nations official, one meeting was scheduled this afternoon with a General of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and with representatives of the Angolan Government. A second, larger meeting was scheduled at a neutral site tomorrow afternoon. Two hours before the meeting, UNAVEM would conduct an inspection of the premises to ensure the safety of its staff.

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The official confirmed that 20 Brazilians and 50 Russians working as specialists on the Papanda Dam, had been seized by forces of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). He said UNAVEM chief and Special Representative Margaret Anstee had spoken with UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi, who promised to do anything to get the people released. The official said the Brazilian Government had a airplane standing by close to Angola, ready to evacuate the people if they were released.

Marrack Goulding, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, will arrive in Luanda tomorrow to work with the Special Representative in the efforts to restore the peace process in Angola. Assistant Secretary-General Kofi Annan is already in Luanda taking part in the peace efforts.

In other news, the Bulgarian Ambassador to the United Nations, Slavi Pashovski, has informed the President of the Security Council that the Bulgarian Chargé d'affaires in the Angolan capital of Luanda has been kidnapped.

In a letter, dated 2 November, Mr. Pashovski said the kidnapping of the Bulgarian official had been confirmed by the Embassy of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic in Sofia. The Ambassador of Zimbabwe and a diplomatic representative of another country were also taken hostages. The letter called on the Security Council to urgently undertake all appropriate measures to secure the safety of the diplomatic missions in Luanda and to assist in the evacuation of their personnel.
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The Co-Chairmen for the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, during talks with Turkish leaders in Ankara this week, rejected the possibility of lifting the arms embargo for Bosnia and Herzegovina, their Spokesman told reporters in Geneva today. The Co-Chairmen, Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance, said that such a move would only widen and deepen the war, with the risk of it spreading to other States in the region.

In a separate development, the World Food Programme (WFP) announced in Rome today that it would supply 201,000 metric tons of emergency food aid to feed more than three million people over the next 150 days in the former Yugoslavia. End-point distribution to people in need would be handled by UNHCR, as the United Nations' lead agency for relief operations in the region.

According to the WFP announcement, some 85,366 of the 286,000 metric tons needed have already been promised, through multilateral pledges and bilaterally by the European Economic Community. The total cost of the operation, scheduled to last for five months, will be $145 million.

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Commercial activities by ships in which a majority or controlling interest is held by a person or undertaking in or operating from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), even though sailing under the flag of some other country, are considered as contrary to the Security Council's mandatory sanctions against that country. That was stated today by the Chairman of the Sanctions Committee established under Council resolution 724 (1991) concerning Yugoslavia, José Ayala Lasso, Permanent Representative to the United Nations of Ecuador.

In a statement to the press issued today in reply to Governments' questions about the Security Council Sanctions Committee's position on the application of sanctions to ships, Mr. Lasso said the decisive question was "who exercises effective control over the vessel, not simply what flag the vessel is flying". Any continued operation and any payments related to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was therefore also in violation of the sanctions imposed under resolution 757 (1992), the Ecuadoran Ambassador said.

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The Commissioner-General of United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Ilter Turkmen, said this morning that it would be almost impossible for the Agency to maintain its present level of operations, let alone cope with additional demands generated by a deteriorating economic situation and an uncertain political environment.

At the end of the Special Political Committee's debate on the work of the Agency, Mr. Turkmen said the Agency would need the widest support possible, particularly from Governments in the region which had not contributed to UNRWA in the past or had contributed on a very small scale.

In a related development, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People has called on the Government of Israel to end extrajudicial killings, cease land confiscation and settlement, release political prisoners, restore civilian liberties and repeal military orders controlling Palestinian life.

In adopting its report to the General Assembly, the Committee also called on the United Nations, the Security Council and the Secretary-General to play an active role in the peace process, noting that the Organization had a permanent responsibility with respect to Palestine.

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The United Nations Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament held its fourth plenary session in New York from 28 to 30 October 1992. Its meetings were chaired by the Executive Chairman, Rolf Ekeus, and the Deputy Executive Chairman, Michael Newlin of the United States.

In a press release issued today at Headquarters, the Special Commission's spokesman, Tim Trevan, said that after being apprised of the activities undertaken under relevant Security Council resolutions since the last plenary

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session, the Commission concentrated its discussions on the following issues: the destruction of Iraq's chemical weapons; ways of implementing the plans for ongoing monitoring and verification to ensure that Iraq does not reacquire proscribed weapons; and plans for the future control of imports into Iraq, in keeping with Security Council resolution 715 (1991).

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